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OCT 17 2006

REMARKS

In response to the action, Applicants have amended claims 1, 4, 6 and 9. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Applicants amended claims 1 and 6 to include abrasive free and pH range of the invention. In particular, the claims now include the 2 to 5 pH range of paragraph 14, line 2 and the abrasive free limitation of paragraph 15, lines 3 and 4. Finally, Applicants amended claims 4, 6 and 9 to include proper punctuation. Applicants respectfully submit that these amendments enter no new matter.

The action rejects claims 1 to 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Machii et al. (US Pat. Pub. No. 2004/0065022). Machii et al. disclose a ceria slurry not related to the abrasive free polishing solution of the invention. Applicants have discovered that modified cellulose without polyacrylic acid is particularly useful for accelerating copper removal in abrasive free polishing solutions. Thus, since Machii et al. require the presence of ceria particles, Applicants respectfully submit that the reference does not disclose or suggest the abrasive free solution of amended claims 1 to 5.

The action rejects claims 1 to 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kodama et al. (US Pat. No. 6,027,554) in view of Watts et al. (US Pat. No. 5,897,375). Kodama et al. disclose silicon nitride as the main polishing agent at a concentration of 0.1 to 50 wt%--see col. 4, lines 16 to 44--this does not suggest polishing in an abrasive free manner. Applicants have discovered that modified cellulose without polyacrylic acid is particularly useful for accelerating copper removal in abrasive free polishing solutions. Thus, since Kodama et al.

require the use of silicon nitride particles, the combined references fail disclose or suggest amended claims 1 to 5.

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in proper form for allowance. If a telephone call would expedite prosecution, please call Applicants' attorney at (302) 283-2136.

Respectfully submitted,

Oct. 17, 2006  
Date

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